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# THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

*pro bono humani generis*

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Dr. Torsten Wiesel  
President  
The Rockefeller University  
New York

Dear Torsten

I am so sorry not to be here in person this afternoon, though I hope to catch up with you this evening. I do have one excuse that I believe Bill Baker will acknowledge: I am called to Washington for advice on matters of national concern. In that regard, I but follow in his giant footsteps.

In fact I well recall my first meetings with Bill: they were in Washington, on the Weinberg PSAC panel on Information, some 35 years ago. This had to do with how the government functioned in the preservation and dissemination of scientific information. I can recall trying to put in a voice for using computers in that role; but being trounced by the majority, that mainframes were too expensive for such menial tasks. I suspect that Bill was closer to being on my side on that call; but the rest were unconvinced.

Not long after that, I joined Bill on the Board of Annual Reviews in Palo Alto, where he contributed many years of service.

Bill Baker has, of course, been a giant in many areas of service: the management of industrial research, where "Bell Labs" became an ikon without parallel; in his own work in chemistry and materials; in consultation with government at the highest levels; and in supporting countless pro bono activities for the nation, for his state and his community. And for us, for his decade of service as Chairman of the Rockefeller Trustees. It was my privilege, during my term as president, to have such a master -- who never swerved from the ideals of the institution, nor from offering me the sternest of guidance and the kindest of support in mediating my own role, relating to the public, the board, the faculty and students and staff. He is a great citizen of his country, and of this institution; and we are lucky to be his compatriots.



Joshua Lederberg